



FOCUS

A publication of the New York State board
Volume 59, Issue #3 / Spring 2010 / ISSN: 1056 3199



AAUW NYS: ENERGIZED AND EFFECTIVE!
by Eileen S. Hartmann, AAUW NYS president, Eshartmann5@gmail.com ~ 585.924.4876

Register for State Convention

Come one, come all to The Otesaga in Cooperstown for the April 23-25 AAUW New York State convention for 2010!

Your state board members, with special leadership from your Program Vice President **Peggy Kelland** and Convention Director **Mary Lou Davis** and their teams, have organized an event worth participating in, so make every effort to travel to this historic location for an AAUW-focused weekend.

Each branch president has received a packet of registration materials in the mail and those materials are meant to be shared with you. To simplify the process, you may register online through our www.aauw-nys.org website by going to the convention tab at the top of the homepage. Registering online will provide you with a **discount** on your registration fee! It's so easy. Review the entire registration packet online and be sure to note the **incentive** for registering early: a chance to win a \$250.00 Talbot's gift certificate. With such enticements how can you resist? Come on — we want you there!

AAUW NYS Board Plans & Projects

In November of 2009, your state officers and directors met in Albany to connect, communicate, and move the mission of AAUW forward for you. The following are some of the issues addressed at our sessions:

- The Branch Special Projects Grant application has been updated to stress that funding is for seed money for **new** branch projects. See the application along with the applications for 21st Century Awards, Equal Pay Day project funds, membership incentives, and a new funding application for supporting students to attend the National Conference for College Women Student Leaders (NCCWSL) at http://www.aauw-nys.org/branch_incentives.htm or go to the www.aauw-nys.org site and click on the Incentives and Awards tab on the left side of the homepage. We support you!
- The 2010 summer leadership conference will be July 9-11 at Cazenovia College, a small, flat campus with an air-conditioned dorm and meeting rooms. Watch for more details so you can participate, learn, and have some summer fun.

- There will be proposed bylaws changes for AAUW NYS presented at our convention.
- Former NYS President **Nancy Mion** has been appointed as chair of the national AAUW Public Policy Committee. Go, Nancy, go! We are so proud of you!
- An application for a new branch to be known as the **Brooklyn New Millennium Branch** has been signed by the appropriate NYS board members. We are awaiting final approval. Stay tuned!
- Visibility Director **Claire Regan** plans to recognize branches at convention with "Visibility Scorecard Awards" for branches with communications usage beyond newsletters.
- The national office of AAUW has established a Leadership Corps which is charged with increasing membership. Be sure your branch websites, brochures, and other communications and recruitment tools are updated so that current information is available to all who wish to know about your mission-related actions.

This past year we have tried to highlight membership matters and pass along to you the importance of retaining and recruiting AAUW members here in New York State. That thrust will continue as we continue weaving AAUW's mission into communities across the state. We all become movers of the mission when we join AAUW.

We must continue to broadcast that equity is still an issue. Therefore, we each need to be a presence, a voice, and an activist to keep our goal of equity visible for all with whom we interact.

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Energized



ENERGIZED & EFFECTIVE! (Continued from page 1)

Your mission-based projects and branch programs will attract members with your enthusiastic efforts. *Let's grow AAUW NYS!*

The following are three New York State special projects the board has asked me to pass along to each branch for action. They are not difficult to implement and will have branch and community impact.

1.) An extension to 2011 gives your branch more time to participate in the Women's History projects proposed by our state historian consultants **Marilynn Smiley** and **Helen Engel**. Marilyn and Helen continue to stress to our branches the importance of completing a publication highlighting the distinguished women of New York State. Each branch has been asked to submit at least one entry representing its geographic area. It's time to complete that task.

Appoint a member who enjoys history, research, or writing to complete this project on behalf of your branch. Let's bring honor to the women in your communities who have been, or still are, outstanding. Project material may be sent to the email addresses found on page 4 of this issue of *FOCUS*. Remember, the sooner the better!

2.) We are providing you with a brochure which has a list of books for young readers. The books call attention to Women's History Month. The list was compiled by the **St. Lawrence County Branch** and local librarians in the Potsdam area.



Called *2010: 50 Books on Women's History for Young Readers*, the list may be downloaded/printed out from our state website where you can scroll down to find it mid-page. The books included are outstanding, so use the list to

reach out to local librarians (school or public) as well as other community members.

Here's a thought: print out the list (so it looks professional) on a single sheet of paper, purchase some of the books, arrange to donate both the list and the books, take a photo of the donors and recipients, and submit the photo with a description to your local newspaper. You will have provided an opportunity for young readers and visibility for your branch generosity while bringing honor and recognition to women. We thank the St. Lawrence County Branch for their kindness in sharing an excellent publication and service.

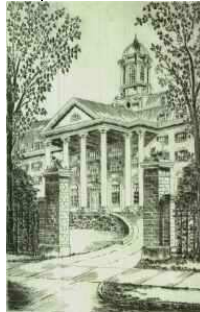
3.) Two of our state board members, Cultural Interests Director **Joan Monk** and International Affairs Director **Melissa Guardaro**, have joined forces to develop a resource list of ideas for you regarding women's issues and ways to break

barriers worldwide. This resource should be ready for usage in time for Women's History Month. Watch for it on the state website and at convention. It will incorporate material from the book *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn.

WOW! The ideas above, combined with pay equity, salary negotiations, legislative activities, the Educational Fund, the Legal Advocacy Fund, membership retention and recruitment, leadership development, STEM programs, Sister to Sister, and other AAUW issues, should enrich your life and boost the women and girls who count on you. Thanks for all you do to keep our organization energized and effective!

SEE YOU AT THE OTESAGA, APRIL 23 TO 25

by Mary Lou Davis, AAUW NYS convention chair, davehdavis@aol.com ~ 845.223.5544



The 2010 New York State Convention will be held at The Otesaga in Cooperstown, April 23 to 25. A raffle for a \$250 gift certificate to Talbot's will be held on Friday evening. Those who register early will receive chances for the raffle. Check the state website for the convention registration forms. A copy has also been mailed to the branch presidents.

For those who arrive early on Friday, **Joan Monk** has planned a 3 p.m. tour of the National Baseball Hall of Fame for a program on "Women's History: Dirt on Their Skirts." Look back over 150 years of striving for diversity on the diamond and learn more about the women who gave their all so that girls and boys could play side-by-side today.



Following the Saturday workshops, join **Gail Sherman** for a belly dancing exercise class. Belly dancing is one of the safest, simplest, and most effective ways to achieve lasting fitness. Learn the basic moves to increase your energy, flexibility, and well-being. The moves are easy to learn, good exercise, low impact, relaxing and FUN. There is no age limit or skill level needed to begin.



Marilynn Smiley has invited her colleague **Robert Auler**, of the Oswego Music Department, to give a piano concert following Saturday's Education Fund dinner. Robert performed for us at a previous convention and we are looking forward to hearing him again.



Join us to meet our keynote speaker **Linda D. Hallman**, AAUW executive director, and to take advantage of the many interesting workshops, speakers and planned activities.

EDUCATIONAL FUND EFFORTS

by Lisa Davis Clark, Ph.D.,
AAUW NYS Educational Fund vice president,
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As we entered the holiday season, branches were encouraged to continue the momentum they'd generated in support of AAUW funds. Educational Fund (EF) chairs received more detailed information about the process now used to encourage these tax-deductible contributions for research, education, advocacy, leadership, and protection programs. The education programs still provide fellowships and grants. Donations can be made in honor of a person of your choice.

During the fall, the **Islip Branch** presented an impressive show of support for education programs, with donations from 32 different members, while the **Oswego Branch** provided the greatest amount of support for research.

Creativity and imagination can spark some wonderful events and help advance fundraising efforts. One example was "Encore Chocolat," sponsored by the **Fairport Area Branch**, which featured a light supper, special gift drawing, chocolate desserts, and the film "Chocolat," in return for an EF donation. What a lovely way to enjoy favorite activities and engage community support for the AAUW Educational Fund.



New York State continues to produce a growing number of scholars to conduct research and engage in AAUW mission-based activity. **Twenty-two of the 212 EF fellowship and grant recipients for the 2009-2010 academic year are New York State residents.**

As we view the support of AAUW, we see the connection between advocacy and research. The United States has just experienced a very controversial and lengthy debate regarding healthcare reform. Fellowship recipient **Sharon DeWitte** of SUNY, Albany, is conducting research on biological sex and health, and we look forward to her publication. Career Grant recipient **Esther Casey** of CUNY, Hunter College, has documented research on the issue of healthcare accessibility for HIV-positive Zulu women, to discover how multimedia design and filmmaking can be incorporated to educate populations and disseminate information. The initiatives involving the proliferation of research in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) have been a part of the AAUW mission for many years. Career Grant recipients **Keita Del Valle**, of the Rochester Institute of Technology, and **Esther Drill**, of Columbia University, are involved in research on web-based resources for entrepreneurs and middle-school girls.

During these extremely difficult economic times it is most gratifying to see so much dedication to the continued support of our EF programs. As of December 31, 2009, 24 of the 43 New York State branches raised \$45,409.46 to support EF.

Branch donations of \$1,000.00 or more were made by a number of New York State branches, including **Bath, Poughkeepsie, Islip, Jefferson County, Huntington, and Rockland County**. Congratulations to the **Buffalo Branch** for the greatest branch support, totaling \$16,000.00, followed by **Westchester County and North Shore, Long Island**.

The work of the Fellowship, Career Grant, and Community Action Grant recipients will continue to thrive as a result of this necessary support.

BERGIE'S ANGELS

by Bergie Lebovitch, AAUW NYS membership vice president, bergie.lebovitch@gmail.com ~ 845.298.4045

The New York State Annual Convention will be the setting for a very exclusive party for "Bergie's Angels." Who are these angels? They are the dedicated members from across the state who, have recruited five or more members over the past four years in the Member Get A Member campaign. Have you checked out the Hall of Fame on the national website to see your name and how close you are to attending this "angelic" reception?

Last year, 11 customized "Keys to the Future" pins were awarded. Have you seen one? This year there'll be 18 members, or more who will be invited to attend the reception and receive their pin. Congratulations to all of you who have had the terrifically rewarding experience of expanding your branch and making new friends in the process.

Current invitees, with their branch and their "heavenly" numbers of new members, are:

Amsterdam/Gloversville/Johnstown:

Elizabeth Russo — 13

Cortland: Ellen Wright — 5

Elmira/Corning: Lenore Lewis — 10

New York City: Maria Ellis — 7

Julie Kleszczewski — 13

Chigurupati Rani — 14

North Shore, Long Island: Jill Hackett — 5

Poughkeepsie: Linda Beyer — 5

Gloria Gibbs — 14

Peggy Kelland — 10

Irene Keyes — 7

Bergie Lebovitch — 34

Liz Moesel — 5

Amy Schwed - 1

Rockland County: Joyce Brown — 15

Laura Pina — 19

St. Lawrence County: Lisa Wilson — 5

Westchester County: Selena Baron — 6



There is still time to join these ladies. Remember your resolution? Try to recruit a new member and sign them up as soon after March 15th as possible, so they may get a year and a quarter for one year's dues. (Bring them in at a "Shape the Future" event where they get half-off on the national dues, or \$24.50, for the same amount of time. That's a bargain for which they will be most grateful.) I'm looking forward to sending YOU an invitation as well....

SUPPORT OUR HISTORICAL PROJECT

by Helen Engel, rengel@oswego.edu ~ 315.343.9678
and Marilynn Smiley, marilynn.smiley@oswego.edu ~
315.343.4803, AAUW NYS historian consultants

WANTED !!
Biographies for
"Women Making
a Difference"
State Project
We need your
help!
Deadline has
been extended
to 2011.

Has your branch submitted biographies of prominent women in your area? We can use more biographies from every branch. Please send completed biographies to us as soon as possible. For further information, check the AAUW NYS website (click on the History tab and then click on Women Making a Difference on the left side). Questions? Contact Helen or Marilynn.

Do You Know?

1. Who was the first woman to run for mayor of Syracuse, NY and was also president of NOW?
2. What woman served as president of Cazenovia College from 1957 to 1971?
3. What well-known actress and humanitarian was known as "The First Lady of Rockland County" and the "First Lady of American Theater"?
4. What woman was a pioneer for higher education of women in South Africa and the founder of the South African Association of University Women?

(Answers: 1. Karen DeCraw, 2. Rhea Doyle Eckel Clark, 3. Helen Hayes, 4. Bertha Stoneman)



CHOOSING CIVILITY

by Joan Monk, AAUW NYS
cultural interests director,
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Where have manners and common courtesy gone? They seem to be relics of the past, along with 8-track tapes,

Betamax and the Edsel.

What can you do to restore these classic hallmarks of society? Join the AAUW NYS Civility Project, modeled on the work done by P. M. Forni at Johns Hopkins University, and see.

Professor Forni created 25 rules of considerate conduct that reflect how we ought to treat each other. These simple rules can help us connect effectively with others at home, work and in our favorite organizations. He offered examples of how to walk the talk to make our encounters with others more pleasant, sociable and meaningful.

The rules seem deceptively simple but are powerful when consistently practiced. Why not try them and see? Here are a few to get you started:



- Pay attention
- Think the best
- Listen
- Be inclusive
- Speak kindly

Visit the Cultural Interests section of the AAUW NYS website for the full list.

PUBLIC POLICY AND THE AAUW NYS CONVENTION

by Nancy Mion, AAUW NYS public policy director, myown220@aol.com ~ 631.472.9377

ADVOCACY is a key word in our mission statement. Advocating for the enactment of laws to promote equity for women and girls is essential. We need to increase the number of women involved in the political process as voters, legislators and elected officials to help in this process. However, it takes more than legislation to obtain equity. We need to be advocates for changing attitudes.

Help AAUW achieve our goals. Come to the NYS Convention and participate in these Public Policy events:

- Public Policy panelists will talk about Women in Government.
- **Melanie Trimble**, executive director, NY Civil Liberties Union Capital Region Chapter, will present a workshop *Dignity for All Students Act: Let's Make it Happen*. See page 5 of the Winter 2009 *FOCUS* (available on the NYS website) for information about the Act
- Author **Francine Moccio**, Ph.D., will give a workshop *Live Wires for a Labor Cause*. She will discuss the relevance of women's struggles in the electrical trades as a way of understanding the barriers and opportunities for women in other "nontraditional" careers such as science and engineering.
- AAUW Executive Director **Linda Hallman** will give a workshop *Public Policy: AAUW Leads the Way*. The title says it all.
- One of our NYS branches will do a presentation on one of their Public Policy programs.
- Enjoy Sunday breakfast with other members who are interested in Public Policy.
- The delegates at the annual business meeting will vote on resolutions, following open discussion.

Call for Resolutions

Resolutions provide a way to have AAUW-NYS support actions that you or your branch believe are important to furthering our mission. Resolutions for the 2010 NYS Convention submitted to Public Policy Director Nancy Mion by **March 15** can be adopted by a majority vote. Resolutions brought from the floor, require a 2/3 vote to be heard and a 3/4 vote to be adopted. For assistance, use *Guidelines for Preparing a Resolution* on the Public Policy page of the state website to write your resolution.

WIN-WIN-WIN: AAUW AND THE COMMUNITY!


by Donna Seymour, AAUW NYS director of communications, onthego@northnet.org ~ 315.265.6985

What do college career offices, AAUW and the economic downturn have in common? The opportunity to create or pool resources to assist those who may need to job search in these tough times.

Across the country, many long-graduated folks are finding themselves in need of updated resumes, a fresh set of job search skills, and some practice in interviewing as they search an increasingly bleak — and crowded with applicants — job market. Some college alumni are returning their alma mater for help at the university's career center to begin the job search process all over again.

What can AAUW branches do to provide much-needed and -appreciated help in these tough times? Take a good look in your branch area to see if local colleges have set up or extended resource centers to alumni who might be looking for career help. If not, you can encourage them to do so. If they have, see what kinds of community assistance might make the services even more meaningful — and accessible.

If career services are not available locally, branches can host networking sessions for resume building, interview preparation, and morale boosting. For some people, additional education may be needed. AAUW can assist with help and encouragement in this area as well, offering scholarship information, information about support services for returning to school in your area, or counseling about how to turn "invisible" life skills into marketable ones.



Another area where AAUW can help is with career clothing. For a decade, the **St. Lawrence County Branch** has sponsored their Professional Clothing Fair, in partnership with SUNY Canton, where local job seekers can "shop" for free, selecting gently-used professional clothing for that all-important job interview. Some folks upgrading employment might need outfits for those first few weeks before the paychecks start coming in. New student teachers always seem to need clothing appropriate for the classroom. Folks who donate clothing are glad to get a small tax deduction and clean closets, knowing others will be able to use the garments. Sometimes the best helping hand is letting someone dress for success!

AAUW branches will be meeting a real need in their community, creating a tremendous amount of good will and visibility, and connecting with exactly the kind of people you should be looking at as potential members. Talk about win-win-win!

CAMPUS CONNECTIONS

by Diane Haney, AAUW NYS college/university director, haneydhd@gmail.com ~ 516.248.0476

Much is happening on the college front: When you speak to faculty and students about AAUW, be sure to mention the member discounts for Princeton Review courses which are available, substantial (15% at any time, more on specials and available to our family members) and which prepare students for the SAT, GRE, LSAT and other such tests. There is also a free, full-length practice test which can be taken. They will review your scores and report back to you. And if AAUW is registering voters on campus, we can call on their local representative for assistance.

A new study-abroad program is forming which will be known as the Global Women's Leadership Program (according to Eileen Hartmann who was kind enough to listen to the webinar when I was out of town). Other programs are to be rolled out in 2010, so watch for them.

Locating information about, or for, colleges and universities at aauw.org is not as straightforward as I would like. If you really want to see all that is available (and I hope some of you do), go to *About AAUW*, scroll down, click on *Campus Connections* and then click on *Join AAUW as a Student Affiliate*. You may also go to the *Member Center*, scroll down to *Membership Resources* and then to *College/University Partners*.

BRANCH BYLAWS: CHANGES MANDATED

by Mimi Korb, AAUW-NYS secretary/bylaws, mmimikorb@aol.com ~ 845.357.4043

2009 has ended and the second deadline for updating bylaws has passed. There are still a few branches within New York State who have not submitted their revised bylaws to the state.

The bylaw changes passed at the AAUW national convention precipitated a number of changes to bylaws at the branch level. These changes are mandated and do not need a branch vote. They are available on the national AAUW website. Model branch bylaws can be accessed at <http://aauw.org/About/bylaws/index.cfm>. Your branch-specific information can easily be merged into this document.

One of the key changes is "one member, one vote" which eliminates having elected delegates at the national convention. Also, the Education Foundation has become the **Educational Fund**. All references to the Association and the AAUW charter have been eliminated and the branch name format has been standardized.

Once you have made the appropriate updates, please forward a copy of your bylaws to me for the NYS files. Questions? Simply call or email.

At the state convention, we will be considering changes to the NYS bylaws including: one member, one vote; a combined EF/LAF position; and procedures for voting between board meetings. Details will be available at the convention.

UPDATE ON BRANCH PROGRAMS

by Peggy Kelland, NYS program vice president,
program@aauw-nys.org ~ 845.297.0507

Our branches have long been involved in their local communities. **Garden City** visited the Nassau County Courthouse in November and Old Westbury Gardens in December. They invited ¡Hola! to their holiday party, and in turn are attending ¡Hola!'s festivities in January. **Nassau** went behind the scenes at Belmont Raceway in November and will be having a journalist from *Newsday* on "Covering Long Island" in January. **Jefferson County** made cookies with the women at the Children's Home. **Buffalo** will be learning about "Refugees in Buffalo", while **Schenectady** will be filling bags for refugee resettlement. **Poughkeepsie** heard "Winning in a Man's World" by the first IBM woman facility manager. **Westchester** heard a speaker on treatment of disability by the media in December and will be visiting the Greenburgh Nature Center.

Many branches had holiday parties, often combined with music: **Bath** (carol sing), **Buffalo** (Aurora Village Singers), **Jamestown** (singer), **Oswego** (recorder concert), **Rochester**, and **Syracuse** ("Our Country's History Through Folksongs"). **Albany** and **Schenectady** had a joint buffet brunch that included both music and a Members' Showcase of arts and crafts by their talented women. **Mid-Island** did fundraising with both a December luncheon and book wrapping. **North Shore** had a Holly Luncheon and fashion show for the Educational Fund (EF). **Rockland** had both a holiday potluck with an auction and book wrapping for EF and a raffle for the Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF). **Staten Island** is planning an LAF luncheon in January.

Islip is hearing about Cuba in January, making "Stone Soup" and listening to versions of the story from around the world in February, and meeting "Women in Government" in March. Other upcoming programs include "Asian Symbolism" in **Amsterdam-Gloversville-Johnstown**, "Live Better Longer" in **Kingston**, "Eleanor Roosevelt" in **Oswego**, and "Financial Literacy for Women" in **Rockland**.

Come to Convention

Join AAUW members from all over New York State at Cooperstown the last weekend in April. Our keynote speaker will be AAUW Executive Director **Linda Hallman**, who will also offer two Saturday workshops on the latest AAUW research report along with an update on public policy.

Other workshops will include "Too Sexy Too Soon: How Media Images Affect Young Girls"; "Live Wires in a Labor Cause: Women in Blue Collar Unions"; "Eleanor Roosevelt: A Woman for All Seasons"; "Don't Fence Me In: Music of Holocaust Refugees at Fort Ontario"; "Dignity for All Students:

Let's Make It a Reality"; and "Value U: A Gender Equity Community Action Initiative".

Saturday will also feature a public policy panel, a LAF litigant at lunch, and an EF recipient at dinner.

On Sunday the Counterpart Breakfast will give both branch officers and other members the opportunity to meet informally with convention speakers and our state officers. It will be followed by the Branch Showcase, which this year will highlight outstanding branch programs on Eleanor Roosevelt, programs for girls, college connections, visibility, and public policy.

Also on Sunday morning, we will be introduced to AAUW-Girl Scout Partnership Programs by **Kerry Connolly**, CEO of Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York, Inc. The convention will conclude with the International Luncheon speaker, **Gina Torry**.

AAUW-NYS EMERGING LEADER AWARD

by Maria Ellis, AAUW NYS district council director,
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I would like to encourage each New York State branch to submit the name of an Emerging Leader to be recognized at the 2010 State Convention. This award is presented to branch leaders who are first-term board members or officers, or AAUW members for less than 3 years, who demonstrate leadership potential through their enthusiasm, creative ideas, and commitment to AAUW's mission.

Every year we recognize new branch leaders who have worked on branch projects, chaired events, raised money for various causes, planned programs, served on board positions and have been involved in their communities.

Visit the NYS website for application forms.

LAF CORNER

by Mildred DeWitt, AAUW-NYS LAF vice president,
aauwmanhattan@aol.com ~ 516.318.1313

Convention – April 23-25, 2010

Our guest speaker for the AAUW NYS convention will be **Claire Schuster**. Many of you met Claire two years ago at convention. She has agreed to return to update us on her ongoing litigation with Berea College as an Legal Advocacy Fund (LAF) litigant.

In *Schuster v. Berea College*, the Kentucky Supreme Court issued a ruling (on August 19, 2009) in favor of Schuster and her pay discrimination case, denying the college's motion for discretionary review. In November 2009, however, the Madison County Court of Appeals ruled on a motion submitted by the college, denying Schuster the right to a new trial and remanding the case back to the appeals court for clarification. Currently, Berea College is sending its arguments to the appeals court, and Schuster will respond.

(Continued on page 7)

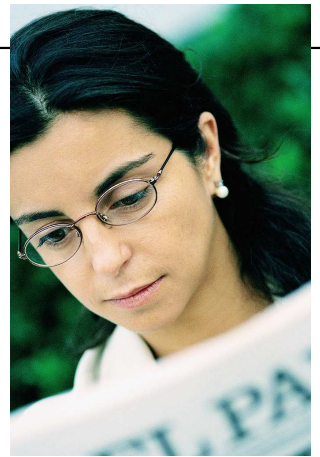
VISIBILITY TOOLS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

by Claire Regan, AAUW-NYS visibility director, regan@siadvance.com ~ 718.816.2845

With just a few clicks of the mouse, your branch can be on its way to building visibility as we move into the 2010 part of our 2009-10 branch program year.

Four new documents are now available on the New York State website, under the Visibility tab. Each is a PDF, so they can be downloaded, printed and used for discussion or action. Here's an overview of each one:

- **General tips for building visibility.** This handout helps a branch get the visibility ball rolling with concepts for a worthwhile discussion. It offers guidance on developing a clear message through "talking points," identifying a target audience, planning newsworthy events, appointing a publicity chair, and pitching stories.
- **Top ten tips for boosting visibility.** This list of the most important actions to keep in mind will get your branch on the visibility map. The tip at the top of the list is "Planning newsworthy events" (see next item to learn how). Tip No. 5 points out the subtle difference between *pitching* a story idea and *pestering* an editor to assign it. (The former always works better than the latter!). These tips come from a seasoned journalist who knows what gets attention in a newsroom, and what doesn't. Tip No. 8 is a reminder that leaving publicity to the last minute will usually work against you.
- **Criteria for the newsworthiness of a story.** The real secret to visibility success is in the planning stage, not the publicity stage. Branches must understand what makes events newsworthy and build them into programming for the year. This tip sheet lists the seven criteria for newsworthiness used by editors in every newsroom. The more criteria a program meets, the more coverage it will get. Not every program needs to be a newsmaker. But make sure a few are sprinkled through the year to keep your branch in the news.
- **Sample press release.** Writing a press release can be intimidating - unless you have a sample to build from (or even *copy!*). The best press release is the least complicated (and therefore the easiest to write). This sample release is based on four W's and an H - who, what, when, where and how much. The W's are in list form, which makes it easy for a branch to prepare and easy for an editor to understand (a win-win situation on both ends). At the bottom is a brief bio, or "backgrounder," on the speaker, and a "boiler-plate" explanation of AAUW. Remember that not everyone is as familiar with our organization as we are, especially editors who deal with many other groups. Providing this AAUW overview encourages an editor to include it in coverage, which in turn gets the word out to the public about who we are and what we do.



Use these four handouts to make 2010 your branch's year for boosting visibility.

LAF CORNER (Continued from page 6)

Baskets for Convention

Information on submitting baskets for the convention is posted on the state website. This traditional fundraiser is an important part of our commitment to LAF and has successfully raised funds that amount to about 25% of our total funding annually.

Please read the directions and, most important, notify me if your branch will be submitting baskets (total of three) so that I can prepare for the display. Questions? Just email or call.

LAF Pins

I will be reviewing the final report for 2009 and will send pins to all who have donated \$100 during the year. If your members have donated \$100 at one time, AAUW will forward the pin. If a member has accumulated \$100 over the year I will send the pin. LAF Liaisons: Please let me know if anyone in your branch who contributed \$100 has not received a pin.

Resource Room

Please email me if your branch would like to have a ½ table display at the convention, or if you are an AAUW NYS board member needing a full table for display (membership, public policy, Educational Fund, and so on).

AAUW AND DIVERSITY: NOT A "WANT" BUT A "NEED"

by Lillis C. McLean, AAUW NYS diversity director,
lillismclean@live.com ~ 716.873.7467



AAUW is grappling with an issue many organizations face in the 21st century, and that is, how do we become a more diversified organization to reflect the diverse and educated citizens in our country?

At its inception, AAUW was founded primarily by white women because only white women were privileged to receive advanced education. Fortunately this entitlement is no longer true.



AAUW

New York State

FOCUS

Spring 2010

ISSN: 1056 3199

www.aauw.org

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PERIODICALS
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USPS-390-570

MISSION STATEMENT

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education and research.

AAUW VALUE PROMISE

By joining AAUW, we belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance.

VISION STATEMENT

AAUW will be a powerful advocate and visible leader in equity and education through research, philanthropy, and measurable change in critical areas impacting the lives of women and girls.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

In principle and practice, AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or class.

FOCUS (USPS-390-570), a quarterly newsletter, is published for the American Association of University Women — New York State by Mount Kisco Printing, 175 Tompkins Avenue, Pleasantville, NY 10570-3144.

The subscription rate of \$4 is included in the New York State dues. Periodicals postage is paid at Pleasantville, NY, 10570, and additional offices.

Questions and articles should be addressed to the *FOCUS* Director, Jean Havens, 40 Kisco Park Drive, Mount Kisco, NY 10549. Telephone: 914.241.4518. Email: FOCUS@aauw-nys.org. Submissions are accepted at the discretion of the editor.

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AAUW AND DIVERSITY (Continued from page 7.)

In this country, women of every race are leaders in fields as varied as education and nuclear physics. Why then do our local branches not reflect these women in the large numbers of careers that they represent?

Another important ingredient in a diversified AAUW is younger women. The same question arises: Why are there so few younger women joining our organization which would enhance and support their personal and professional life? A third question to also consider is: Why do people join any particular organization? I believe in part the answer to each of the questions is that an organization/group/community must be perceived as a group that resonates with one's beliefs.

"Perception" is the operative word here. I believe it is incumbent on each of us to seek out our friends from other cultures and generations and invite them to join our work, invite them to "see" us as valuing their presence, invite them so we can celebrate the unique gifts they would bring.



AAUW members have worked diligently to promote women in education, politics, social reform and in legal rights. That is how we are visible, but as Soledad O'Brien pointed out in CNN's recent interviews with Latino women, minority women often feel invisible in this culture. How do we, members of AAUW, make these women visible, included, and valued?

There are practical things we can do. We could consider an advertizing campaign, talks on college campuses, presence at career events, but no approach is more meaningful than personal invitation. Invitation is a powerful gesture. When we are invited, we are valued. (This starts in kindergarten with birthday party invitations.)

Women of every race, religion, age will enrich and challenge us to new visions and tasks. Let's not cut ourselves short. Let each chapter grapple with how to open the doors of welcome and hospitality to our sisters whose very presence will strengthen and enhance the AAUW. As they say, "The ball is in our court."

Over a half a century ago, Zora Neale Hurston, a literary giant, said all of this so simply: "Sometimes I feel discriminated against, but it does not make me angry. It merely astonishes me. How can anyone deny themselves the pleasure of my company? It is beyond me."